

REGULAR WEEKLY SESSION-----ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL

April 16, 2001

2:00 p.m.

The Council of the City of Roanoke met in regular session on Monday, April 16, 2001, at 2:00 p.m., the regular meeting hour, in the City Council Chamber, fourth floor, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., City of Roanoke, Virginia, with Mayor Ralph K. Smith presiding, pursuant to Chapter 2, Administration, Article II, City Council, Section 2-15, Rules of Procedure, Rule 1, Regular Meetings, Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended.

PRESENT: Council Members William H. Carder, C. Nelson Harris, W. Alvin Hudson, Jr., William White, Sr. (arrived late), Linda F. Wyatt, William D. Bestpitch and Mayor Ralph K. Smith-----7.

ABSENT: None-----0.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Darlene L. Burcham, City Manager; William M. Hackworth, City Attorney; James D. Grisso, Director of Finance; and Mary F. Parker, City Clerk.

The meeting was opened with a prayer by The Reverend Carl T. Tinsley, Pastor, First Baptist Church of Buena Vista.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Mayor Ralph K. Smith.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor advised that all matters listed under the Consent Agenda were considered to be routine by the Members of Council and would be enacted by one motion in the form, or forms, listed on the Consent Agenda, and if discussion was desired, that item would be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately. He called specific attention to three requests for Closed Meetings to discuss a matter with regard to expansion of an existing business where no previous announcement of the interest of the business in expanding its facilities in the City has been made; to discuss a matter with regard to acquisition of real property for

public purposes; and to discuss personnel matters with regard to vacancies on various authorities, boards, commissions and committees appointed by Council.

MINUTES: Minutes of the regular meeting of Council held on Monday, April 2, 2001, were before the body.

(For full text, see Minutes on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that the reading of the Minutes be dispensed with and that the Minutes be approved as recorded. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

COMMITTEES-COUNCIL: A communication from Mayor Ralph K. Smith requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss personnel matters relating to vacancies on various authorities, boards, commissions and committees

appointed by the Council, pursuant to Section 2.1-344 (A)(1), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, was before the body.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that Council concur in the request of the Mayor to convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss personnel matters relating to vacancies on various authorities, boards, commissions and committees appointed by the Council, pursuant to Section 2.1-344 (A)(1), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

CITY MANAGER-COUNCIL: A communication from the City Manager requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss a matter with regard to expansion of an existing business where no previous announcement of the interest of the business in expanding its facilities in the City has been made, pursuant to Section 2.1-344 (A)(5), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, was before the body.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that Council concur in the request of the City Manager to convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss a matter with regard to expansion of an existing business where no previous announcement of the interest of the business in expanding its facilities in the City has been made, pursuant to Section 2.1-344 (A)(5), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

PURCHASE/SALE OF PROPERTY–COUNCIL: A communication from the City Manager requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss a matter with regard to acquisition of real property for public purposes, pursuant to Section 2.1-344 (A)(3), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, was before the body.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk’s Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that Council concur in the request of the City Manager to convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss a matter with regard to acquisition of real property for public purposes, pursuant to Section 2.1-344 (A)(3), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

HEALTH DEPARTMENT-LEASES-CITY PROPERTY: A communication from the City Manager advising that Lease Agreements with the State Department of Health for use of City properties located at 515 and 530 8th Street (Official Tax Nos. 1113111 and 1113210) known as the Health Center Building and the Health Center Annex have been in place since 1968 and 1979, respectively; current leases will expire on June 30, 2001; the lessee has requested a new lease to include both buildings, containing approximately 20,000 square feet, at a rate of \$38,950.00 per quarter, for a total lease fee of \$467,400.00, for a term of three years ending June 30, 2004, with a three-month cancellation provision; and the lessee has declared its intent to utilize the cancellation provision upon completion of the proposed new facility, was before Council.

The City Manager recommended that she be authorized to advertise a public hearing and, lacking any comments to the contrary, execute a new lease with the State Department of Health for properties located at 515 and 530 Eighth Street, S. W., for a term of three years.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that Council concur in the recommendation of the City Manager. The motion seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE-DELINQUENT TAXES: A report of the Director of Finance advising that as a part of the City's ongoing efforts to collect delinquent real estate taxes, an advertisement was placed in The Roanoke Times on Monday, April 16, 2001, containing a list of those properties that remain unpaid from the list approved for tax sale by Council on February 5, 2001, was before Council.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that the report be received and filed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE-BONDS/BOND ISSUES: A report of the Director of Finance advising that the City recently reached the five year anniversary of the issuance of its 1996 General Obligation Bonds; as a result, \$266,571.00 was remitted to the Internal Revenue Service last week, representing payment of arbitrage rebate liability; under regulations issued by the IRS in 1993, the City is required to remit excess earnings on investments related to the \$31.1 million 1996 bond proceeds over that amount which would have been earned if those investments were invested at a rate equal the bond yield which is approximately 4.91 per cent, while the return on investments experienced by the City was approximately 5.28 per cent over the five year period ended February 1, 2001; and City earnings during that time totaled approximately \$3,347,000.00, was before Council.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that the report be received and filed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

COMMITTEES-SPECIAL EVENTS: A communication from Catherine Fox tendering her resignation as a member of the Special Events Committee, effective immediately, was before Council.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that the communication be received and filed and that the resignation be accepted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

COMMITTEES-ROANOKE ARTS COMMISSION: A communication from Matt Kennell tendering his resignation as a member of the Roanoke Arts Commission, effective immediately, was before Council.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that the communication be received and filed and that the resignation be accepted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

**OATHS OF OFFICE-COMMITTEES-COMMUNITY PLANNING-
HOUSING/AUTHORITY-ROANOKE ARTS COMMISSION:** The following reports of
qualification were before Council:

**S. Wayne Campbell as a member of the City Planning
Commission for a term ending December 31, 2004;**

**Carolyn M. Bumbry, James W. Burks, Jr., and H. Victor
Gilchrist as Commissioners of the Roanoke
Redevelopment and Housing Authority for terms ending
August 31, 2004; and**

**Robert Humphreys as a member of the Roanoke Arts
Commission to fill the unexpired term of Ann D. Masters,
resigned, ending June 30, 2001.**

(See Oaths or Affirmations of Office on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

**ACTION: Mr. Harris moved that the report of qualification be received and filed. The
motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:**

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

REGULAR AGENDA

HEARING OF CITIZENS UPON PUBLIC MATTERS:

TAXICABS AND FOR-HIRE VEHICLES: C. R. Sisson, representing Liberty Cab Company, spoke in support of the requirement for installation of safety shields in all taxicabs operating in the City of Roanoke. He called attention to a recent incident in which a taxicab driver was wounded and the situation might have been avoided if a safety shield had been installed. He stated that taxicab drivers are many times more likely to be injured, assaulted or murdered than persons in other types of professions. He advised that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Secretary of Labor have proposed a ten point program that would eliminate the epidemic of attacks on taxicab drivers and safety shields is at the top of the list. He called attention to a 1995 study of the New York Taxicab and Limousine Service

Commission which compares taxicab drivers driving shielded versus those driving unshielded vehicles, and the study revealed that a driver in an unshielded cab is 20 times more likely to be assaulted, injured or murdered than a driver in a shielded vehicle, and the study resulted in a New York law requiring that all taxicabs be equipped with safety shields. He noted that installation of safety shields in all taxicabs in the Roanoke Valley will not only add to the safety of the drivers, but it will help to attract the right kind of drivers. He advised that in the near future, he will present a proposed ordinance for consideration by the City requiring the installation of safety shields in all taxicabs operating in the City of Roanoke.

Without objection by Council, the Mayor advised that the remarks of Mr. Sisson would be received and filed.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

CITY TREASURER-TAXES: David C. Anderson, City Treasurer, addressed Council with regard to the City's personal property tax billing for the year 2001. He advised that while it has been the procedure for many years to mail personal property tax bills and offer decals for sale on April 15, because of the confusion regarding the tax relief percentage this year, the City has not prepared its personal property tax bills. He explained that the percentage reduction has been projected to be 70 per

cent in 2001; preliminary testing shows the City's gross personal property billing of approximately \$26 million, with tax relief representing approximately \$71.8 million included in the gross; should the City bill its citizens based on the 70 per cent and should the 70 per cent change, total billing would be incorrect; the Tax Relief Law of 1998 requires the citizen to pay his or her portion before the Treasurer can request reimbursement from the Commonwealth of Virginia; the City's computer program does not allow the tax relief percentage to be changed once the billing has been prepared; total preparation of the City's billing cycle takes approximately eight working days, even though State law requires only 14 days for a billing, and citizens should have at least 30 days to pay their personal property tax and purchase new decals.

Mr. Anderson advised that given these conditions, it may be necessary to extend the City's due date for personal property taxes and decals for the year 2001 only, and requested the option of addressing Council at a May City Council meeting to establish a new due date for both personal property taxes and decals, if necessary. He stated that both the City Manager and the Director of Finance concur in his request.

Without objection by Council, the Mayor advised that the remarks of Mr. Anderson would be received and filed.

BUDGET-ROANOKE VALLEY RESOURCE AUTHORITY: A communication from John R. Hubbard, Chief Executive Officer, Roanoke Valley Resource Authority, transmitting the Resource Authority's Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2001-02, totaling \$8,323,525.00 which represents an increase of four per cent over the current 2000/2001 budget, with tipping fee rates remaining the same for commercial users and reduced for Charter Members, was before Council.

It was advised that pursuant to the Member Use Agreement, the Resource Authority's 2001/2002 annual budget is submitted for approval by Council.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35272-041601) A RESOLUTION approving the annual budget of the Roanoke Valley Resource Authority for Fiscal Year 2001-2002, upon certain terms and conditions.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35272-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

At this point, Council Member White entered the meeting.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

CITY MANAGER:

BRIEFINGS:

BUDGET: The City Manager presented the proposed fiscal year 2001-02 fiscal year budget for the City of Roanoke which is the culmination of approximately four and one half months of work by City staff. She presented a \$191 million balanced budget, representing a 3.9 per cent increase over fiscal year 2000-01, which budget was balanced largely with local revenue growth and re-engineering activities by City departments, and growth in state revenues was approximately one-fourth of what the City normally receives. She stated that initiatives proposed for funding include enhancements to service delivery in a number of key priority areas for the City which include public education, public safety, neighborhood and the environment. From an immediate standpoint, if the proposed budget is approved, she advised that there will be an initiative to take vehicles home by public safety officers residing in the City,

i.e. police officers; enhanced recycling; composting; a program to conserve and protect the environment; additional staff resources committed to code enforcement and neighborhood activities such as paving, street lights, curb and gutter; more grants to neighborhoods through HUD and General Fund programs and more HUD money to meet community needs. She stated that the budget also stresses water conservation, and advised that the City's current policy tends to reward those who use large amounts of water rather than those who conserve; therefore, the proposed budget suggests that steps be taken to address the issue. On a long term basis, she added that the proposed budget seeks to promote aggressive marketing of the City of Roanoke by taking advantage of tourism for the benefit of the community, an ambitious capital improvements program is proposed and in excess of \$2 million is being dedicated, either in cash or debt service, for a preliminary capital program that was discussed by Council in March 2001, and there are significant efforts to create capital improvement plans for the City's ageing infrastructure.

The City Manager advised that Council will hold a formal public hearing on the proposed budget on Monday, April 23, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., at the Roanoke Civic Center Exhibit Hall, work sessions will follow on April 25 and 26, and adoption of the budget is proposed for Monday, May 7 at the 2:00 p.m. (The meeting hour was later changed to 3:15 p.m.) She stated that the budget now becomes the City Council's budget for review and recommended adjustments as Council deems necessary. She explained

that following adoption of the budget on May 7, City staff will return to Council during the month of June with the capital improvement program which is a separate document. She asked that Council identify those issues that are of particular concern as soon as possible so that City staff can address those items during the budget study work sessions.

Without objection by Council, the Mayor advised that the proposed budget would be referred to fiscal year 2001-02 budget study for consideration.

ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR ACTION:

CITY CODE-WATER RESOURCES: The City Manager submitted a communication advising that Council adopted the Carvins Cove Land Use Plan on May 15, 2000; also adopted was an ordinance to amend the City Code permitting certain types of recreational activities at the Carvins Cove Reservoir, including hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, picnicking, fishing, boating, and use of gasoline boat motors not to exceed ten horsepower; and additional revisions to the City Code need to be adopted to be congruent with the May 15 ordinance, as follows:

1. Article I in general - The City's Water Department has been renamed the City's Water Division.
2. Article II - Council previously approved changing the name of Carvins Cove to Carvins Cove Natural Reserve as suggested in the Carvins Cove Land Use Plan.
3. Section 35-16 – This section of the Code states that people can visit the dam at Carvins Cove Natural Reserve via State Route No. 815 for the purpose of obtaining general views of the dam. Parking is prohibited by the Virginia Department of Transportation on State Route 815 and no parking is available at

the end of State Route 815; therefore, the route needs to be removed as a source for visiting the dam.

4. Sections 35-70 (a) and (b), 35-22, and 35-56 use the phrase one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise, which is confusing when enforcing these sections of the Code during summer and winter months of operation. To clarify City Code sections, the specific dates and hours of operation should be defined.
5. Section 35-46 – Council previously approved only gasoline motors, ten horsepower and under, to be used at Carvins Cove Natural Reserve as recommended in the Carvins Cove Land Use Plan.
6. Sections 35-47 and 35-50 – Boats have previously been allowed to remain on the reservoir after hours; however, this cannot be allowed because of City liability.

The City Manager recommended that Council approve policy changes as above set forth through City Code amendments to ensure that all sections of the City Code are congruent.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Ms. Wyatt offered the following ordinance and dispensing with the second reading of the title paragraph:

(#35273-041601) AN ORDINANCE amending and reordaining Sec. 35-1, Rules and regulations for operation of water department, of Division I, Generally, of Article I, In General; Sec. 35-14, Application of article; definition, Sec. 35-15, Violations of article, Sec. 35-16, Designation and use of restricted area, Sec. 35-17, Designation and general use of recreational area, Sec. 35-19, Commercial activities, Sec. 35-20, Entering or remaining in watershed area prohibited during certain hours, Sec. 35-22, Fishing, Sec. 35-23, Swimming prohibited, Sec. 35-24, Picnicking, Sec. 35-25, Fires generally, Sec. 35-26, Smoking or lighting flame on pier, Sec. 35-27, Littering, Sec. 35-28, Domestic animals not to run at large, and Sec. 35-30, Possession or discharge of firearms, of Division 1, Generally, of Article II, Carvins Cove Area; Sec. 35-42, Generally, Sec. 35-43, City not responsible for boats, Sec. 35-44, Boat permits and certificates, Sec. 35-46, Limitation on length of boat and size of motor, Sec. 35-47, Metal boats to have adequate air chambers, Sec. 35-50, Mooring; dockage space, and Sec. 35-56, Operation of boat at night, of Division 2, Boating, of Article II, Carvins Cove Area; adding a new section to be entitled Sec. 35-29, Hiking, biking and horseback

riding, of Division 1, Generally, of Article II, Carvins Cove Area; and repealing Sec. 35-57, Special boating privileges, of Division 2, Boating, of Article II, Carvins Cove Area, of Chapter 35, Water, of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, to provide for the renaming of the Carvins Cove area, to permit additional uses of the Carvins Cove area, to regulate such uses to ensure the protection of the potable water supply for the general public's health, safety and welfare; and dispensing with the second reading of the title of this ordinance.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Ms. Wyatt moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35273-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

**CITY CODE-DRUGS/SUBSTANCE ABUSE-CITY PROPERTY-FEE
COMPENDIUM-PARKS AND RECREATION: The City Manager submitted a communication advising that special events have become an important asset to the Roanoke community, many of which are held in Roanoke parks or plazas; for certain events, attendance and patron enjoyment are increased when alcoholic beverages are available; City Code §26-97, Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages, Article IV, Parks, Chapter 24, Public Buildings and Property, prohibits possessing or drinking alcohol in any City park; and a proposed ordinance amending §26-97 would provide for possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages pursuant to conditions of a City Manager issued Alcohol Permit for the following locations: Elmwood Park, Mill Mountain Park, Century Square, First Union Plaza, and Mountain View.**

It was further advised that under the revised ordinance, only 501(c), nonprofit organizations, would be allowed to apply for an Alcohol Permit; issuance of the permit would be conditioned on the applicant also having received a permit or license

from the State ABC Board and, providing evidence of appropriate insurance; and in addition, the amendment would create a \$50.00 fee for the City's issuance of the Alcohol Permit and a \$500.00 damage/clean-up deposit.

It was explained that rationale for inclusion of each of the proposed locations is as follows:

Elmwood Park is a key festival area for the City and alcohol is currently served just outside the boundaries of the park during some festivals. Enactment of the proposed amendment would allow festival organizers to place the area where alcohol can be consumed closer to the entertainment. (An example is Taste of the Blue Ridge Blues and Jazz Festival.)

The Discovery Center, located in Mill Mountain Park, when opened, will be available for rental and with its location in the City's signature park, it is an ideal location for small-scale entertainment. Mill Mountain Park is also a desirable location for festivals.

Century Square, First Union Plaza, and Mountain View are also great locations for after-hours activities, business functions, and fund raising events. Alcohol is currently permitted at these three locations because

in the past these properties were not considered to be parks by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

The City Manager recommended that Council adopt an ordinance amending and reordaining §24-97, Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages, Article IV, Parks, Chapter 24, Public Buildings and Property; and amend the Fee Compendium to reflect the new fee of \$50.00 for an Alcohol Permit and the refundable damage/clean-up deposit of \$500.00.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Carder offered the following emergency ordinance:

(#35274-041601) AN ORDINANCE amending and reordaining §26-97, Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages, of Article IV, Parks, of Chapter 24, Public Buildings and Property Generally, of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, by adding new subsections (a) and (b), to provide for possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages in Elmwood Park, Century Square at Church Avenue, S. E., across from Fire Station No. 1, Mill Mountain Park, Mountain View and First Union Plaza at Market Street, S. E., adjacent to the Market Square Walkway; amending the City's Fee Compendium to establish a fee in

connection with the City's issuance of an Alcohol Permit and a requirement of posting a refundable deposit; and providing for an emergency.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Carder moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35274-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bestpitch and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----

-----5.

NAYS: Council Members Harris and Hudson-----2.

CITY CODE-BUILDINGS/BUILDING DEPARTMENT: The City Manager submitted a communication advising that the Virginia Building Maintenance Code was revised by the State in September, 2000; among certain changes was the deletion of a locality's authority to demolish or board up buildings (except in emergencies), unless the locality has adopted authority under other provisions of the Code of Virginia; if the property owner does not do so, the City of Roanoke has authority under Section 15.2-906 of the Code of Virginia to demolish, repair or board up a structure that might endanger public health or safety; and the City may recover its costs by billing the property owner and placing a lien against the property.

It was further advised that the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, needs to be modified to ensure that the City continues to have authority to board up and demolish unsafe structures and to perform repairs on unsafe deteriorating structures when the property owner does not do so.

The City Manager recommended that Council adopt an ordinance amending Section 7-2, Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, to authorize removal, repair or securing of unsafe structures, as authorized by Section 15.2-906, Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Carder offered the following emergency ordinance:

(#35275-041601) AN ORDINANCE amending Section 7-2, Recovery of cost when city removes, repairs, or secures unsafe building, of Chapter 7, Building Regulations, of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, to provide for the recovery of costs when the city removes, repairs or secures buildings, walls, or other structures which might endanger the public health or safety; and providing for an emergency.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Carder moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35275-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

PARKS AND RECREATION-CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM: The City Manager submitted a communication advising that Council appropriated Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) funds on August 21, 2000, for replacement of outdated playground equipment in various City parks, including \$782,000.00 to Account No. 008-620-9735-9001; and five bids were received and evaluated by City staff, with Cunningham Associates, Inc., submitting the low bid meeting required specifications, at a total cost of \$636,515.20 for upgrading 19 City parks.

The City Manager recommended that she be authorized to accept the bid of Cunningham Associates, Inc., for playground equipment and surfacing for 19 City parks, at a total cost of \$636,515.20, and that all other bids received by the City be rejected.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35276-041601) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of a bid and execution of a contract with Cunningham Associates, Inc., for the provision of playground equipment and surfacing for nineteen (19) City parks, upon certain terms and conditions, and rejecting other bids received.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35276-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

PARKS AND RECREATION: The City Manager submitted a communication advising that Parks and Grounds currently has the responsibility, with the use of City employees, for cleaning City Parks restrooms; with the need for improved services, improved safety factors and the ability to meet customer needs, the City has sought responsible firms to provide bids to furnish this service; specifications were developed and an invitation to bid was sent to nine providers; two bids were received

and evaluated and Clean Sweep of the Roanoke Valley, Inc., was the lowest bidder meeting all specifications at a cost of \$65,425.00 annually.

The City Manager recommended that she be authorized to enter into a contract, in a form approved by the City Attorney, with Clean Sweep of the Roanoke Valley, Inc., for cleaning of restrooms in City parks for one year, with the option by both parties, in writing, to renew for four additional one-year periods, and that all other bids received by the City be rejected.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Members White and Wyatt raised questions and expressed concerns regarding the need for background checks on persons engaged in providing the service, the frequency of cleaning restrooms, and supervision of personnel; whereupon, Mr. White moved that the matter be tabled pending additional information from the City Manager. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and unanimously adopted. (See additional action on pages 46 - 47.)

CITY SHERIFF-EQUIPMENT: The City Manager submitted a communication advising that the City Sheriff's Office and Jail has radio equipment that has served its useful life and is no longer economically advisable to repair; original portable

radios were purchased in 1995 and the repeater in 1985, and this equipment is no longer manufactured and repair parts are expensive and difficult to locate; manufacturers of the equipment have advised that once their parts supply is depleted, they will be unable to restock; and it is important that the system be replaced because it provides the “man down” security feature for departmental personnel while on duty.

It was further advised that bids were solicited for replacement of the radio system; four bids were received and evaluated with Kane’s Communication System, Inc., submitting the low bid and meeting the required specifications.

The City Manager recommended that she be authorized to accept the bid of Kane's Communication Systems, Inc., for portable radios and accessories, at a cost of \$165,701.11, and reject all other bids received by the City.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35277-041601) A RESOLUTION accepting the bid of Kane's Communication Systems, Inc., for the purchase of portable radios and accessories for the City Sheriff's Office and Jail, upon certain terms and conditions; and rejecting all other bids made for such items.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35277-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT-TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT: The City Manager submitted a communication advising that the City currently has approximately 2,500 Centrex telephone lines that include the Roanoke City School System and the City administration; an Invitation for Bid for long distance network was issued on January 26, 2001, since the current contract with OneStar Long Distance, Inc., expired on January 21, 2001, and the City is currently operating on a month-to-month contract; two bids were received and evaluated, however, they did not meet City specifications as set forth in the Invitation for Bid.

It was further advised that following the bid committee's evaluation, other alternatives were investigated with regard to long distance networking; the Commonwealth of Virginia has a new COVANET contract for voice and data network, and the contract, as procured by the State, provides that local governments may participate; the arrangement has no terms or volume requirements, only necessitating a month-to-month agreement, which would be to the City's advantage since the industry is in constant change and with the City's current telephone system bid in process; prices through the State Contract are confirmed at a guaranteed rate until June, 2001, at which time contract prices will decrease; and funding is available in operating accounts to cover the cost of the service.

The City Manager recommended that Council reject all bids received by the City for long distance network services and authorize the City Manager to sign all necessary forms and agreements with the Department of Information Technology (DIT), a State agency, to use the COVANET service at rates not to exceed the current rates plus five per cent.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35278-041601) A RESOLUTION rejecting all bids to provide long distance network service.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35278-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35279-041601) A RESOLUTION authorizing the purchase of certain services for long distance network service by utilizing the Commonwealth of Virginia's contract with a certain vendor; and authorizing the proper City officials to execute the requisite agreements for such service.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35279-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

BUDGET-CMERP-EQUIPMENT: The City Manager submitted a communication advising that on October 2, 2000, Council concurred in funding recommendations for

the fiscal year 2000-2001 Capital Maintenance and Equipment Replacement Program (CMERP); CMERP is used to fund equipment purchases, maintenance and other one-time priority purchases; and approval by Council is required for appropriation of funds from CMERP to various accounts to provide for acquisition of the following:

Street Lighting - Peters Creek Road Lighting - \$60,000.00

To provide for street lighting on a portion of Peters Creek extension that was not included in the original project.

Municipal Building - Upgrade to Alarm System - \$37,200.00

To provide for acquisition of an upgrade to the current fire alarm system with 15 additional audible-visual devices and replacement of 26 audible devices with audible-visual devices.

The City Manager recommended that Council adopt an ordinance appropriating \$97,200.00 to departmental accounts, as follows:

\$60,000.00 to an account in the Capital Projects Fund to be established by the Director of Finance.

\$37,200.00 to Signals & Alarms, Account No. 001-530-4160-3050.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Harris offered the following emergency ordinance:

(#35280-041601) AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain certain sections of the 2000-2001 General and Capital Projects Funds Appropriations, and providing for an emergency.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35280-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

CITY ATTORNEY:

CITY CODE-COMMITTEES-SCHOOLS-WATER RESOURCES-TAXES: The City Attorney submitted a written report as a follow up to Council's directive of April 2, 2001, with regard to recommendations made by a committee appointed by Council to review and submit recommendations in connection with certain restructuring of City Council appointed authorities, boards, commission, and committees.

The City Attorney further advised that in order to implement certain proposals, three ordinances and a resolution were submitted, one of which would discontinue the City Investment Committee and another the Water Resources Committee, the third ordinance would change the procedure for electing Trustees to the Roanoke City School Board to eliminate the requirement that a public reception be held for

School Board applicants, and a resolution would discontinue various other committees and appointments made by Council, including the Economic Development Commission and the Revenue Study Commission.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Harris offered the following emergency ordinance:

(#35281-041601) AN ORDINANCE amending Chapter 2, Administration, Article XIV, Authorities, Boards, Commissions and Committees Generally, Division II, Permanent Committees, of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, by repealing §2-302, City Investment Committee; and providing for an emergency.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35281-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

Mr. Harris offered the following emergency ordinance:

(#35282-041601) AN ORDINANCE amending Chapter 2, Administration, Article XIV, Authorities, Boards, Commissions and Committees Generally, Division II, Permanent Committees, of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, by repealing Section 2-300, Water Resources Committee; and providing for an emergency.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35282-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

Mr. Harris offered the following emergency ordinance:

(#35283-041601) AN ORDINANCE amending Article II, Procedure for Election of School Trustees, of Chapter 9, Education, of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, by repealing subsection (a) of §9-19, Preliminary screening of candidates, to eliminate the requirement of holding a public reception for School Board applicants, and providing for an emergency.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35283-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35284-041601) A RESOLUTION discontinuing certain Council-appointed commissions and committees, and appointments by Council to certain committees.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35284-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

BUDGET-BRIDGES: Council Member W. Alvin Hudson, Jr., Chairperson, Bid Committee, presented a written report on behalf of the Committee, in connection with bids received by the City for a project consisting of various repairs to four City bridges: Franklin Road over Roanoke River, 13th Street over Tinker Creek, Mason Mill Road over Tinker Creek, and Read Road over the Norfolk Southern Railway.

The Bid Committee recommended that Council accept the bid of Lanford Brothers Co., Inc., in the amount of \$151,526.24 and 60 consecutive calendar days of contract time; that the Director of Finance be authorized to transfer \$150,000.00

from Transfer to Capital, Account No. 001-250-9310-9508, to existing Bridge Maintenance, Account No. 008-052-9549-9003.

The City Manager submitted a statement of concurrence in the recommendation of the Bid Committee.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Hudson offered the following emergency ordinance:

(#35295-041601) AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain certain sections of the 2000-2001 Capital Projects Fund Appropriations, and providing for an emergency.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Hudson moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35295-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35285-041601) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of a bid and execution of a contract with Lanford Brothers Co., Inc., for making various repairs to four bridges within the City, upon certain terms and conditions.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35285-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Council Member W. Alvin Hudson, Jr., Chairperson, Bid Committee, presented a written report on behalf of the Committee, in connection with bids received by the City for ballfield improvements at Wasena Park - Field 2 and Fallon Park.

It was advised that Council appropriated \$493,253.00 of CIP funds on August 21, 2000, for renovations to City park softball/baseball fields, and Phase I of the program involves two fields: Wasena Park - Field 2 and Fallon Park; an invitation to bid was publicly advertised and three bids were received with Breakell, Inc., submitting the lowest responsive bid in the amount of \$135,187.00 (\$129,859.00 for the Base Bid and \$5,328.00 for Additive Bid Item No. 2 – to provide an eight foot wide warning strip at the base of the outfield fencing for both fields) and a construction time of 50 consecutive calendar days to complete the project.

The Bid Committee recommended that Council accept the bid of Breakell, Inc., in the amount of \$135,187.00 and 50 consecutive calendar days of contract time; and reject all other bids received by the City.

The City Manager submitted a statement of concurrence in the recommendation of the Bid Committee.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Hudson offered the following resolution:

(#35286-041601) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of a bid and execution of a contract with Breakell, Inc., for ballfield improvements at Wasena Park - Field 2 and Fallon Park, upon certain terms and conditions, and rejecting other bids received.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Hudson moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35286-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and adopted by the following vote:

**AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch,
and Mayor Smith-----7.**

NAYS: None-----0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE.

**INTRODUCTION AND CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND
RESOLUTIONS:**

**CITY MANAGER-CITY EMPLOYEES: Mr. Harris offered the following
resolution confirming the appointment of Rolanda A. Johson as Assistant City
Manager, effective May 1, 2001:**

(#35287-041601) A RESOLUTION confirming the City Manager's appointment of Rolanda A. Johnson as Assistant City Manager.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35287-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

CITY COUNCIL-YOUTH: Mr. Harris offered the following resolution changing the time and place of commencement of the regular meeting of City Council scheduled to be held at 12:15 p.m., on Monday, May 7, 2001 to 12:00 Noon, in the Grand Ballroom, Clarion Airport Roanoke, 2727 Ferndale Drive, N. W., with the 2:00 p.m. session on the same date to be held in the City Council Chamber of the Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building of the Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W.:

(#35288-041601) A RESOLUTION changing the time and place of commencement of the regular meeting of City Council scheduled to be held at 12:15 p.m., on Monday, May 7, 2001.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35288-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----7.

NAYS: None-----0.

MOTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

INQUIRIES AND/OR COMMENTS BY THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL:

BUDGET-PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS-CMERP: Council Member Bestpitch called attention to a request to be submitted by Mill Mountain Zoo, Inc., for Capital Maintenance and Equipment Replacement Program funds for Mill Mountain Zoo upgrades, and asked that the matter be included in discussions regarding CMERP funding to be held later in the year.

OTHER HEARING OF CITIZENS UPON PUBLIC MATTERS:

COMPLAINTS-WATER RESOURCES: Mr. George Trent, 3622 Troutland Avenue, N. E., expressed concern that his water service was disconnected by the City because of non-payment when he was only one cycle behind in submitting payment. He also expressed concern that such a vital necessity of life can be so easily taken away from a citizen when water should be free.

At 2:55 p.m., the Mayor declared the meeting in recess for three closed sessions.

At 5:45 p.m., the meeting reconvened in the City Council Chamber, with all Members of the Council in attendance, except Mr. White, Mayor Smith presiding.

ACTION: **COUNCIL:** With respect to the Closed Meeting just concluded, Mr. Carder moved that each Member of City Council certify to the best of his or her knowledge that: (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in any motion by which any Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered by City Council. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bestpitch and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White left the meeting during the closed session.)

OATHS OF OFFICE-COMMITTEES-HOUSING/AUTHORITY: The Mayor advised that the term of office of E. Duane Howard, Elaina Loritts-Duckett, Nancy Canova, and Brenda Powell as members of the Fair Housing Board expired on March 31, 2001, and called for nominations to fill the vacancies.

Mr. Harris placed in nomination the name of Frank Feather.

Mr. Bestpitch placed in nomination the names of Bryan Grimes Creasy, Nancy Canova, and Brenda Powell.

There being no further nominations, Frank Feather and Bryan Grimes Creasy were appointed and Nancy Canova and Brenda Powell were reappointed as members of the Fair Housing Board for terms ending March 30, 2004, by the following vote:

**FOR MR. FEATHER, MR. CREASY, MS. CANOVA, AND MS. POWELL: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----
-----6.**

(Council Member White was absent.)

OATHS OF OFFICE-COMMITTEES-ROANOKE NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP: The Mayor advised that the term of office of Mark Petersen as a member of the Roanoke Neighborhood Partnership Steering Committee will expire on November 30, 2001, and called for nominations to fill the vacancy.

Ms. Wyatt placed in nomination the name of James P. Armstrong.

There being no further nominations, James P. Armstrong was appointed as a member of the Roanoke Neighborhood Partnership Steering Committee to fill the unexpired term of Mark Petersen, resigned, ending November 30, 2001, by the following vote:

FOR MR. ARMSTRONG: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

(Council Member White was absent.)

OATHS OF OFFICE-COMMITTEES-CITY COUNCIL-SPECIAL EVENTS: The Mayor called attention to a request of the Special Events Committee that Council appoint a liaison member to the committee; whereupon, it was the consensus of Council that Vice-Mayor William H. Carder will serve in that capacity.

At 5:50 p.m., the Mayor declared the meeting in recess until 7:00 p.m.

On Monday, April 16, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., the Roanoke City Council reconvened in regular session in the City Council Chamber, fourth floor, Noel C. Taylor Municipal

Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., City of Roanoke, with the following Council Members in attendance, Mayor Smith presiding.

**PRESENT: Council Members William H. Carder, C. Nelson Harris, W. Alvin Hudson, Jr., Linda F. Wyatt, William D. Bestpitch, and Mayor Ralph K. Smith-----
-----6.**

ABSENT: Council Member William White, Sr.-----1.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Darlene L. Burcham, City Manager; William M. Hackworth, City Attorney; James D. Grisso, Director of Finance; and Mary F. Parker, City Clerk.

The reconvened meeting was opened with a prayer by Council Member C. Nelson Harris.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Boy Scouts of America Troop #17, St. John's Episcopal Church.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

SCHOOLS: Council having previously authorized the City Clerk to advertise a public hearing for Monday, April 16, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, to receive the views of citizens regarding appointment of two Trustees to the Roanoke City School Board for three year terms of office commencing July 1, 2001, and ending June 30,2004, the matter was before the body. Candidates for the two positions are: Gary M. Bowman, Melvin W. Garrett, Melinda J. Payne, William E. Skeen, and Ruth C. Willson.

Advertisement of the public hearing was published in The Roanoke Times on Friday, April 6, 2001.

(See publisher's affidavit on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Martin, 3325 Oakland Boulevard, N. W., Co-Presidents, William Fleming High School PTSA, endorsed the candidacy of Ruth Willson for reappointment to the School Board for the following reasons: she has worked hard to promote improvements in school facilities, including the major high school projects; she takes pride in Roanoke's school system; her involvement and experience as past President of Roanoke Central Council PTA; she is sensitive to the needs of students and teachers; she believes that the education of all students must

be a top City-wide priority; and she attends school activities, and has been an active participant in school-related events for the past 20 years.

Ms. Jamie Payne, 301 Rutherford Avenue, N. W., endorsed the reappointment of her mother, Melinda Payne, to the School Board for the following reasons: she is a dedicated School Board member who cares about all students in the Roanoke City Public Schools and she supports teachers and all other school personnel.

Mr. Robert Turcotte, 1890 Arlington Road, S. W., endorsed the reappointment of Ruth Willson for the following reasons: she is the right person at the right time and in the right place doing the right thing; she makes worthwhile contributions to all committees on which she serves, with ability and good sense; and she will continue to bring credit to Roanoke's school system.

Lisa Isom, President, New Century Venture Center, endorsed the candidacy of William Skeen to the School Board for the following reasons: he serves as a charter member of the New Century Venture Center Board of Directors and has been instrumental in its operation and success over the past five years; he is a member of the Finance Committee and his financial background and experience with Total Action Against Poverty make him a great asset to the committee; he is a visionary who sees the overall picture, but is also able to break the big picture down into

workable scenarios and solutions; he is thorough and well organized, both personally and professionally; he serves on various boards and task forces and has a strong commitment to quality of life issues; and he has two children in the Roanoke City School System.

Tim Goad, President, Roanoke Education Association, endorsed the candidacy of Melinda Payne and William Skeen for the following reasons: Ms. Payne's experience on the School Board speaks for itself as one of forthright honesty and consistency, with high expectations of everyone in Roanoke's educational family; she takes a well reasoned, no nonsense approach to policy making and education and expects the same at every level of the school system; she is concerned for all of Roanoke's children and has a panoramic vision of success for all students and educators of Roanoke and is able to pinpoint that vision when needed; and she is a well experienced School Board Trustee. Mr. Goad advised that Mr. Skeen has a thorough understanding of the challenges that students face in today's world and his interest is in the success of all students in the Roanoke City Public Schools; in his experiences at Total Action Against Poverty, he has shared the concerns of Roanoke's children and families and holds the community, City Council, the School Board, School administration, educators and parents accountable for student success; he is of the opinion that the ultimate beneficiary of a good education is the student and his or her success and future depends on hard work and diligent efforts

toward their studies; he has a good grasp on the issues faced by students and educators; and his eagerness to collaborate creatively to find solutions and his insistence on open lines of communication demonstrate that he is a well prepared candidate for School Board Trustee.

Mr. Juan Motley, 2837 Cove Road N. W., endorsed the candidacy of Melinda Payne for the following reasons: he has worked with Ms. Payne on various issues and she focuses on what is best for all children; she is knowledgeable about the needs of school employees; she is a role model, but most importantly, she is not a rubber stamp for the Superintendent of Schools; and she is respected by and respectful of school employees.

Ms. Rose Motley, 2835 Cove Road, N. W., endorsed the candidacy of Melinda Payne and William Skeen for the following reasons: Ms. Payne has changed the format of School Board meetings so that they are more on task and proceed with greater efficiency; and she is careful to insure that all points of view are heard. She advised that the experience of Mr. Skeen at Total Action Against Poverty and on various boards would bring an individual from a different background to the School Board who is not totally enmeshed in the school system; and he would represent fresh, new talent on the School Board.

Ms. Nancy Patterson, 2723 Stephenson Avenue, S. W., endorsed the candidacy of Ruth Willson for reappointment to the School Board for the following reasons: her combination of the right talents and traits; her visibility and accessibility in and to the schools; her ability to listen, her thoroughness and caring for all students and their needs, her integrity, and her willingness to sacrifice countless hours to the task, all of which are characteristics that have served Roanoke well for the past three years.

Mr. Matt Despard, 1934 Avon Road, S. W., spoke in support of the candidacy of William Skeen for the following reasons: he has an impressive record of community service; he has a strong business background, specifically in finance; he understands the important connection between education and economic development; he has solid, common sense ideas about how to make the school system even stronger; he has a well balanced perspective on the role of the Standards of Learning testing; he has a strong commitment to recruiting, hiring and retaining good teachers; he has good ideas on how to help youth who are struggling and may be at risk; and he is a good listener, who is fair, honest and works well with others.

Ms. Annette Lewis, 4606 Casper Drive, N. E., endorsed the candidacy of William Skeen for the following reasons: he is an active participant in all organizations on which he serves; he is committed to all tasks that he undertakes; he has a sincere interest in the school system; he believes that parents should be partners with the school system and provide a valuable lesson at home fostering a strong work ethic, a feeling of self-worth, sound study habits, shared responsibilities, respect for authority, encouragement to do their best at all times and the knowledge to know when to relax and have fun at the appropriate time; he is concerned about the plight of Roanoke's youth and the accessibility of quality education; he is concerned for those who are turned off by the school system and is willing to work with the

Superintendent of Schools and School Board members to identify resources that will attract and retain good teachers and sound programs that will stimulate students and personnel to stay in the school system; he is open minded, but believes that life skills programs are needed that address both self-esteem and constructive conflict resolution to improve school safety and prevent violence; and he is committed to recruiting, hiring and retaining the best teachers as the most pressing need in Roanoke's school system.

Ms. Brenda McDaniel, 2037 Carter Road, S. W., endorsed the candidacy of William Skeen for the following reasons: he is a civic volunteer who gives his all to any task that is assigned to him; he is an idea man and a worker bee which are valuable assets to any active board; he is an active, interested, engaged and effective participant; he has made important contributions to many Roanoke organizations, including Total Action Against Poverty, West End Center, United Way, Roanoke Neighborhood Partnership and many others; he is dependable, reliable and effective; he takes an active role in the education of his three children; and he is an asset to any organization on which he serves.

Mr. A. L. Holland, 3425 Kershaw Road, N. W., endorsed the candidacy of William Skeen for the following reasons: he is punctual, honest, a graduate of the University of Virginia, he has served on the Virginia Western Community College

Board of Directors; he has three children who came through the City School system; he serves on the Total Action Against Poverty Board of Directors and is currently working at TAP to help clients find a better way of life.

Ms. Pamela Corcoran, 2250 Sewell Lane, S. W., endorsed the candidacy of Ruth Willson and William Skeen for the following reasons: Mr. Skeen says and shows his commitment to personal, business and community empowerment in the vision, pragmatism, knowledge and commitment that he brings to Roanoke; and he has the unique characteristic of viewing problems as opportunities and demonstrates excellence in all endeavors. She advised that Ms. Willson is active in school-related activities and represents students, classified personnel and faculty; she demonstrates a personal commitment to insuring consistent application of the discipline and behavior guidelines for the City, and Ms. Willson personally assisted her family in connection with an assault that was made on her son at James Madison Middle School; and she has a personal commitment to insure that all needs are recognized and that all voices are heard which makes her an excellent incumbent for reappointment.

Mr. Thomas Chapman, 2115 Rutrough Road, S. E., endorsed the reappointment of Ruth Willson for the following reasons: her concern for all students and the application of those programs that are geared toward gifted students to all children;

the value of incumbency which goes beyond her three years of experience on the School Board in her capacity as a full-time volunteer in the schools for many years; her desire to seek input from parents and others on how the schools are performing; she thinks “out of the box” and asks questions; she is committed to the most efficient use of school facilities and school resources to serve all residents of the City and not just the children; she is committed to helping all children who graduate from the Roanoke City Public Schools to become responsible citizens; and her commitment to attract new businesses to the City by providing good labor resources in the Roanoke Valley.

Mr. Carl Cooper, 2120 Carroll Avenue, N. W., endorsed the candidacy of Melinda Payne for the following reasons: she has demonstrated a commitment and a zeal to youth in a number of ways by dealing with families and children from all walks of life; and her attitude toward children makes her a worthwhile candidate for reappointment to the School Board.

There being no further speakers, the Mayor declared the public hearing closed, and advised that all remarks would be received and filed.

CITY CODE-ZONING: Pursuant to Resolution No. 25523 adopted by the Council on Monday, April 6, 1981, the City Clerk having advertised a public hearing for Monday, April 16, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on a proposed amendment to Chapter 36.1, Zoning, Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, to add a new subsection (9) to Section 36.1-250, Special exception uses, and new subsections (10) and (11), of Division 4, Industrial Districts, of Article III, District Regulations, to permit certain automobile rental establishments and limousine service and taxicab establishments as special exception uses in the LM, Light Manufacturing District, and automobile rental, limousine service, taxicab and general service establishments as permitted uses in the HM, Heavy Manufacturing District, the matter was before the body.

Legal advertisement of the public hearing was published in The Roanoke Times on Friday, March 30, 2001, and Friday, April 6, 2001.

(See publisher's affidavit on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

A report of the City Planning Commission advising that on November 7, 2000, Edward A. Natt, representing a client at 701 Irvine Street, requested that the Zoning Ordinance be amended to provide for the provision of business and personal services in the Light Manufacturing District as a permitted use; similar language was also requested to be included in the HM, Heavy Manufacturing District; and the request involves a private limousine service that desires to legally operate in an existing building in an industrial area of the Norwich neighborhood, was before Council.

The City Planning Commission recommended that Council approve the proposed amendments to the LM, Light Manufacturing, and HM, Heavy Manufacturing Districts.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Evelyn D. Lander, Agent, City Planning Commission, appeared before Council in support of the request.

ACTION: Mr. Hudson offered the following ordinance and dispensing with the second reading of the title paragraph:

(#35289-041601) AN ORDINANCE amending and reordaining §36.1-250, Special exception uses, by adding new subsection (9); and §36.1-270, Permitted uses, by adding new subsections (10) and (11), of Division 4, Industrial Districts, of Article III, District Regulations, of Chapter 36.1, Zoning, of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, to permit certain automobile rental establishments and limousine service and taxicab establishments as special exception uses in the LM, Light Manufacturing District, and automobile rental, limousine service, taxicab and general service establishments as permitted uses in the HM, Heavy Manufacturing District; and dispensing with the second reading of the title of this ordinance.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Hudson moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35289-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder.

The Mayor inquired if there were persons present who would like to address Council with regard to the matter. There being none, Ordinance No. 35289-041601 was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Pursuant to Resolution No. 25523 adopted by the Council on Monday, April 6, 1981, the City Clerk having advertised a public hearing for Monday, April 16, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on the request of the Roanoke Valley SPCA and Sandra L. Overstreet that a certain undeveloped portion of Edmund Avenue, N. E., lying adjacent to Official Tax

Nos. 3210616-3210620, inclusive, and the undeveloped portion of an alley lying adjacent to Official Tax Nos. 3210701-3210708, inclusive, being parallel to and between Edmund Avenue and Baldwin Avenue, be permanently vacated, discontinued and closed, the matter was before the body.

Legal advertisement of the public hearing was published in The Roanoke Times on Friday, March 30, 2001, and Friday, April 6, 2001.

(See publisher's affidavit on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

A report of the City Planning Commission advising that the SPCA has a contract to purchase certain properties adjacent to its existing animal shelter for the purpose of constructing a new regional animal shelter and impoundment facility, was before Council.

The Planning Commission recommended that Council approve the request to close and vacate subject portions of undeveloped Edmund Avenue, N. E., and the alley, subject to the following conditions:

The applicant shall submit a subdivision plat to the Agent for the Planning Commission, receive all required approvals, and record the

plat with the Clerk of the Circuit Court for the City of Roanoke, said plat shall combine all properties which would otherwise be landlocked by the requested closure, or otherwise dispose of the land within the right-of-way to be vacated in a manner consistent with law, and retain appropriate easements for the installation and maintenance of any and all existing utilities that may be located within the right-of-way, including the right of ingress and egress, said plat shall also dedicate an easement for a 20 foot wide pedestrian and bicycle trail within the vacated portions of Edmund Avenue from 13th Street, S. W. to its eastern terminus.

Upon meeting all other conditions for granting the application, the applicant shall record a certified copy of the enabling ordinance with the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Roanoke, Virginia, and index the same in the name of the City of Roanoke, Virginia, as Grantor, and in the name of the Petitioner, and the names of any other parties in interest who may so request, as Grantees; and the applicant shall pay such fees and charges as are required by the Clerk for recording the documents.

Upon recording a certified copy of the enabling ordinance with the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Roanoke, Virginia, the applicant shall

file the Clerk's receipt with the Engineer for the City of Roanoke, Virginia, demonstrating that such recording has occurred.

If the above conditions have not been met within a period of one year from the date of adoption of the enabling ordinance, said ordinance shall be null and void with no further action by City Council being necessary.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris offered the following ordinance and dispensing with the second reading of the title paragraph:

(#35290-041601) AN ORDINANCE permanently vacating, discontinuing and closing certain public right-of-way in the City of Roanoke, Virginia, as more particularly described hereinafter; and dispensing with the second reading of this ordinance.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35290-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson.

W. Eric Branscom, Attorney, appeared before Council in support of the request of his clients.

The Mayor inquired if there were persons present who would like to address Council with regard to the request. There being none, Ordinance No. 35290-041601 was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

ZONING: Pursuant to Resolution No. 25523 adopted by the Council on Monday, April 6, 1981, the City Clerk having advertised a public hearing for Monday, April 16, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on the

request of the Commonwealth Development Group of Roanoke, LLC, that five contiguous tracts of land at or near the southeastern side of Highland Farm Road and the southeasterly terminus of Tuckawana Circle, be rezoned from RM-2, Residential Multi-Family District, to LM, Light Manufacturing District, subject to certain conditions proffered by the petitioner, the matter was before the body.

Legal advertisement of the public hearing was published in The Roanoke Times on Friday, March 30, 2001, and Friday, April 6, 2001.

(See publisher's affidavit on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

A report of the City Planning Commission advising that the petitioner intends to re-subdivide the five parcels of land to create three new parcels for light manufacturing use; two of the new parcels would front onto Highland Farm Road, immediately across from the existing multifamily apartment complex; the petitioner intends to develop the northernmost parcel, located at the corner of Highland Farm Road and Tuckawana Circle, with an 18,000 square-foot distribution warehouse for Virginia Trane heating and air-conditioning products, with the distribution center to be partially screened from Interstate 581 by the existing Virginia Trane office building, was before Council.

The Planning Commission recommended that Council approve the request, subject to certain conditions proffered by the petitioner.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris offered the following ordinance and dispensing with the second reading of the title paragraph:

(#35291-041601) AN ORDINANCE to amend §36.1-3, Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, and Sheet No. 647, Sectional 1976 Zone Map, City of Roanoke, to rezone certain property within the City, subject to certain conditions proffered by the applicant; and dispensing with the second reading of this ordinance.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35291-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson.

Donald L. Wetherington, Attorney, appeared before Council in support of the request of his client.

The Mayor inquired if there were persons present who would like to address Council with regard to the request. There being none, Ordinance No. 35291-041601 was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Pursuant to Resolution No. 25523 adopted by the Council on Monday, April 6, 1981, the City Clerk having advertised a public hearing for Monday, April 16, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on the request of the City of Roanoke that a portion of Albemarle Avenue, S.

E., extending in a westerly direction from Williamson Road, be permanently vacated, discontinued and closed, the matter was before the body.

Legal advertisement of the public hearing was published in The Roanoke Times on Friday, March 30, 2001, and Friday, April 6, 2001.

(See publisher's affidavit on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

A report of the City Planning Commission advising that the property abutting upon the easterly side of this section of Albemarle Avenue is owned by Walters, LLC; the owner is currently renovating the existing building on the property to establish a new biomedical related business enterprise; and the new enterprise, Excel Prosthetics and Orthotics Center, will design, manufacture and fit artificial limbs for the handicapped, was before Council.

It was further advised that the functional operation of the new center will include and require the construction of a lengthy concrete handicap access ramp that will extend from the easterly side of the existing building, along and parallel to the front property line for a distance of 62 feet; attached to the street side of the ramp will be a series of nine spaced, steel I-beams partially encased in concrete columns which will be approximately 13 feet in height and extend from the easterly side of the

existing building for a distance of approximately 92 feet; the completed structure will extend over and into the existing right-of-way of Albemarle Avenue for a distance of approximately 29 feet; six of the nine columned beams have already been constructed at the site; and the City's purpose in closing and vacating this section of Albemarle Avenue is to provide the owners of the new center with additional land sufficient to facilitate the location and construction of the handicap ramp in exchange for a certain parcel of land that is situated adjacent to the Williamson Road, S. E., right-of-way needed by the City as a link to the Mill Mountain Greenway System.

The Planning Commission recommended that Council approve the request and authorize execution of any and all documents necessary to effect the transfer of the subject properties, subject to the following conditions:

The City Manager shall execute and the City Clerk shall attest any and all plats, deeds, or documents approved as to form by the City Attorney, which are necessary to transfer whatever right of ownership the City has in the subject right-of-way to adjacent property owners and to accept the property referenced in the petition.

The owner, Walters, LLC., shall apply for and obtain, a variance from the requirements of Section 36.1-593 (a) of the Zoning Ordinance, from the

Board of Zoning Appeals prior to any further construction or extension of the concrete ramp and prior to the recordation of the subdivision plat.

Closure and vacation of the described portion of Albemarle Avenue S. E., shall be subject to the conveyance by Walters, LLC, to the City of Roanoke, of that parcel of land shown on a survey plat and described as “Private property to be dedicated for public street purposes.”

The applicant shall submit a subdivision plat to the Agent for the Planning Commission, receive all required approvals thereof, and record the plat with the Clerk of the Circuit Court for the City of Roanoke. Said plat shall combine all properties which would otherwise be landlocked by the requested closure, or otherwise dispose of the land within the right-of-way to be vacated in a manner consistent with law, and retain appropriate easements for the installation and maintenance of any and all existing utilities that may be located within the right-of-way, including the right of ingress and egress.

Upon meeting all other conditions to the granting of the application, the applicant shall deliver a certified copy of the enabling ordinance for recordation to the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Roanoke,

Virginia, indexing the same in the name of the City of Roanoke, Virginia, as Grantor, and in the name of the Petitioner, and the names of any other parties in interest who may so request, as Grantees. The applicant shall pay such fees and charges as are required by the Clerk to effect such recordation.

Upon recording a certified copy of the enabling ordinance with the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Roanoke, Virginia, the applicant shall file with the Engineer for the City of Roanoke, Virginia, the Clerk's receipt, demonstrating that such recordation has occurred.

If the above conditions have not been met within a period of one year from the date of adoption of the enabling ordinance, said ordinance shall be null and void with no further action by City Council being necessary.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris offered the following ordinance and dispensing with the second reading of the title paragraph:

(#35292-041601) AN ORDINANCE permanently vacating, discontinuing and closing certain public right-of-way in the City of Roanoke, Virginia, as more particularly described hereinafter; and dispensing with the second reading of this ordinance.

(For full text of Ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 35292-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hudson.

The City Manager appeared before Council in support of the request.

The Mayor inquired if there were persons present who would like to address Council with regard to the request. There being none, Ordinance No. 35292-041601 was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

BONDS/BOND ISSUES-HOUSING/AUTHORITY-RIVERSIDE CENTRE:

Pursuant to action of the Council; the City Clerk having advertised a public hearing for Monday, April 16, 2001, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on a proposed resolution authorizing the City to contract a debt and to issue general obligation public improvement bonds of the City (and in anticipation of issuance thereof general obligation public improvement bond anticipation notes of the City), in the principal amount of \$12,000.000.00, the proceeds of which are to be granted by the City to the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority for the purpose of assisting the Authority in paying a portion of the costs of a redevelopment project in the City, known as the South Jefferson Redevelopment Project, the matter was before the body.

Legal advertisement of the public hearing was published in The Roanoke Times on Monday, April 2, 2001, and Monday, April 9, 2001.

(See publisher's affidavit on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

The City Manager and the Director of Finance submitted a joint report advising that on February 5, 2001, the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority

prepared and presented to Council a plan for improvement and revitalization of the South Jefferson Redevelopment Area (Redevelopment Plan); Council approved the Redevelopment Plan on March 19, 2001, the primary purpose of which is to provide for private reinvestment and economic growth through redevelopment by private enterprise; the Redevelopment Plan includes the goals of eliminating blight, improving business activity, and creating additional economic value for the City of Roanoke; and the Redevelopment Plan also addresses the needs of providing a versatile mix of complimentary land uses and making the best use of the area's location.

It was further advised that on March 19, 2001, City officials authorized execution of a Performance Agreement among the City of Roanoke, Carilion Health System (CHS), and Carilion Biomedical Institute (CBI); CHS and CBI desire to be the first major occupants within the Redevelopment Plan Area in order to develop a biomedical institute for research and development; the City desires to encourage such development in order to develop a research and technology park in the area; Council adopted Ordinance No. 35250-031901 on March 19, 2001, authorizing City officials to execute an agreement, South Jefferson Agreement 2, between the City of Roanoke and the Housing Authority; South Jefferson Agreement 2 allows the Housing Authority to implement the Redevelopment Plan presented on February 5, 2001, whereby, the City expresses its intent to provide funds of \$14 million for the South Jefferson Agreement 2 and of that amount, \$12 million is proposed to be provided through the issuance of general obligation bonds of the City.

(For full text, see report on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35293-041601) A RESOLUTION authorizing the issuance of twelve million dollars (\$12,000,000) principal amount of General Obligations of the City of Roanoke, Virginia, in the form of General Obligation Public Improvement Bonds of such city, the

proceeds of which are to be granted by such city to the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority for the purpose of assisting such authority in paying a portion of the costs of a redevelopment project in the city, known as the South Jefferson Redevelopment Project; fixing the form, denomination and certain other details of such bonds; providing for the sale of such bonds; authorizing the preparation of a preliminary official statement and an official statement relating to such bonds and the distribution thereof and the execution of a certificate relating to such official statement; authorizing the execution and delivery of a continuing disclosure certificate relating to such bonds; authorizing and providing for the issuance and sale of a like principal amount of General Obligation Public Improvement Bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance and sale of such bonds; and otherwise providing with respect to the issuance, sale and delivery of such bonds and notes.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: **Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35293-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder.**

The Mayor inquired if there were persons present who would like to address Council with regard to the matter. There being none, Resolution No. 35293-041601 was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, White, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

OTHER HEARING OF CITIZENS:

PARKS AND RECREATION: Mr. E. Duane Howard, 508-B Walnut Avenue, S. W., requested that Council consider closing Wiley Drive on weekends to vehicular traffic, and presented a petition in support of the request representing over 350 signatures.

(For full text, see petition on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Ms. Diane Elliott, 2609 Richelieu Avenue, S. W., spoke in support of keeping Wiley Drive closed to vehicular traffic at all times; however, she expressed support of the proposal of Mr. Howard to close the area to vehicular traffic on weekends. She added that there are very few places in the City that are not impacted by vehicular traffic and Smith Park could serve as the replacement for South Roanoke Park which was taken over as the Roanoke Sports Complex.

Mr. Matthew Yearout, 833 Marshall Avenue, S. W., spoke in support of Mr. Howard's proposal because Smith Park is an excellent place to relax and exercise, where people are not in competition with vehicles. He stated that speed bumps will encourage recklessness if the road is closed to one-way traffic because Wiley Drive will serve as a short cut.

Ms. Bonnie Pivocex, 833 Marshall Avenue, S. W., endorsed the closing of Wiley Drive to vehicular traffic, and stated that it is rare to have a park facility free of vehicular traffic within the limits of a City and she would like for Smith Park to remain vehicle-free.

Mr. Brent Riley, 5280 Wade Road, spoke to the uniqueness of Smith Park without vehicular traffic. He stated that the flow of energy that takes place is a valuable and unique asset for the City; and Wasena Park is in close proximity and will serve the needs of vehicular traffic. He supported weekend closure of Smith Park.

Mr. Preston Hoffman, 402 Washington Avenue, S. W., spoke in support of keeping Smith Park closed to vehicular traffic on weekends.

Mr. Andrew Null, 371 Albemarle Avenue, S. E., advised that Smith Park is a good place for children to ride bicycles, roller skate, etc., in a vehicle-free environment. He stated that since there has been no vehicular traffic, littering has not been an issue and he would prefer that Wiley Drive remain closed.

Mr. Matthew Togo, 371 Albemarle Avenue, S. E., and Mr. Andrew Phillips, 601 Highland Avenue, S. E., spoke in support of keeping Smith Park closed to vehicular traffic for exercise, biking, walking, roller blading, etc.

Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Knappe, 2220 Westover Avenue, S. W., spoke in support of keeping Smith Park closed to vehicular traffic. Mrs. Knappe stated that Smith Park down to Piedmont Park is a good greenway area, however, the river is polluted with

trash. She stated that if Wiley Drive cannot be closed on a permanent basis, she would support weekend closure.

Ms. Sarah Farrell, 2501 Crystal Spring Avenue, S. W., requested that Smith Park continue to be vehicle-free because it is a quality of life issue for bicycling and walking. She stated that Roanoke needs to provide its citizens with recreational areas that are free of the safety concerns that are associated with vehicles and allow cars in Smith Park will ruin the experience of bicycling for pedestrians and create a dangerous traffic situation. During the past three years that Wiley Drive has been closed to vehicular traffic, she called attention to the lack of pollution and the quiet atmosphere that has prevailed.

Ms. Anna Smith, 2501 Crystal Spring Avenue, S. W., spoke in support of keeping Smith Park free of vehicles for the safety of children who like to play in the park.

Mr. Mark Fuller, 1936 Grandin Road, S. W., advised that it is an enjoyable experience to ride his bicycle in an area where there is no vehicular traffic.

BONDS/BOND ISSUES-COMPLAINTS-HOUSING/AUTHORITY-CITY EMPLOYEES-RIVERSIDE CENTRE: Mr. Robert Gravely, 1412 Moorman Road, N. W., complained about the \$12 million bond proceeds provided to the Roanoke

Redevelopment and Housing Authority in connection with the South Jefferson Redevelopment Project; and low wages for the City work force.

ARMORY/STADIUM: Mr. Chris Craft, 1508 East Gate Avenue, N. E., apologized for a previous statement he made to Council regarding Victory Stadium, which statement was presented in the absence of all of the pertinent information.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Earlier in the meeting, Council having tabled action on a communication from the City Manager in connection with authorizing a contract with Clean Sweep of the Roanoke Valley, Inc., for cleaning City parks restrooms, pending additional information from the City Manager with regard to background checks on persons engaged in providing the service, frequency of cleaning restrooms, and supervision of personnel; whereupon, Mr. Harris moved that the matter be removed from the table. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bestpitch and adopted.

Mr. Harris offered the following resolution:

(#35294-041601) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of a bid and execution of a contract with Clean Sweep of the Roanoke Valley, Inc., for the

provision of restroom cleaning services in City parks, upon certain terms and conditions, and rejecting all other bids received.

(For full text of Resolution, see Resolution Book No. 64.)

ACTION: Mr. Harris moved the adoption of Resolution No. 35294-041601. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carder and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Carder, Harris, Hudson, Wyatt, Bestpitch, and Mayor Smith-----6.

NAYS: None-----0.

(Council Member White was absent.)

It was explained that the City Manager has informally responded to certain questions raised by the Members of Council earlier in the meeting and the City Manager advised that it would be in the best interest of the City to act on the contract so that the services to be provided may commence as soon as possible.

The City Manager advised that Council Member Wyatt continues to be concerned about a background check on employees who will be performing the cleaning services in the park; whereupon, the City Manager stated that she is prepared to make such requirement a stipulation of the contract with Clean Sweep of the Roanoke Valley, Inc.

At 8:55 p.m., the Mayor declared the meeting in recess until Thursday, April 19, 2001, at 4:00 p.m., in the City Council Chamber, at which time Council will interview five applicants seeking appointment to the Roanoke City School Board for three year terms of office commencing July 1, 2001, and ending June 30, 2004.

The Monday, April 16, 2001, regular meeting of Roanoke City Council which was recessed until Thursday, April 19, 2001, was called to order at 4:00 p.m., in the City Council Chamber, fourth floor, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., City of Roanoke, with Mayor Ralph K. Smith presiding.

The purpose of the reconvened meeting was to interview five candidates for two positions on the Roanoke City School Board for two year terms of office commencing July 1, 2001, and ending June 30, 2004.

PRESENT: Council Members William H. Carder, W. Alvin Hudson, Jr., William White, Sr., Linda F. Wyatt, and Mayor Ralph K. Smith-----6.

ABSENT: Council Member C. Nelson Harris-----1.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mary F. Parker, City Clerk.

SCHOOL BOARD APPLICANTS PRESENT: Ruth C. Willson, William E. Skeen, Melvin W. Garrett, Melinda J. Payne and Gary M. Bowman.

The Mayor advised that past actions of Council to comply with the School Board selection process include:

At regular meetings of the City Council held on January 16 and February 5, Council announced its intention to elect Trustees to the Roanoke City School Board for terms commencing July 1, 2001.

Advertisements were placed in The Roanoke Times and in The Roanoke Tribune inviting applications for the vacancies. Six applications were received in the City Clerk's Office prior to the 5:00 p.m. deadline on Friday, March 9, 2001. One application was later withdrawn.

On March 19, 2001, at 6:00 p.m., Council held a reception with the candidates which was open to the public, and at Council's 7:00 p.m. meeting, all applications were reviewed and considered.

At the regular meeting of City Council on Monday, April 2, 2001, at 2:00 p.m., Council voted to interview Ruth C. Willson, William E. Skeen, Melvin W. Garrett, Melinda J. Payne and Gary M. Bowman for the two vacancies.

A notice was published in The Roanoke Times inviting attendance at a public hearing to be held by City Council on Monday, April 16, 2000, at 7:00 p.m., to receive the views of citizens regarding School Board

applicants, and further inviting the public to submit proposed questions to the candidates by filing such written questions in the City Clerk's Office by 5:00 p.m., on Thursday, April 12, 2001. No questions were submitted.

The Mayor explained that the selection process provides that Council will publicly interview each candidate separately and out of the presence and hearing of the other candidates; and the following interviews were scheduled:

4:00 p.m.	-	Ruth C. Willson
4:30 p.m.	-	Melvin W. Garrett
5:00 p.m.	-	William E. Skeen
5:30 p.m.	-	Melinda J. Payne
6:00 p.m.	-	Gary M. Bowman

The Mayor pointed out that each candidate will be given the opportunity to make an opening statement of not more than five minutes; and thereafter, Council will ask such questions, as Council, in its discretion, deems advisable.

He stated that Council will hold five interviews and each interview will consist of approximately 30 minutes; after each interview has been completed, the candidate

may leave the Council Chamber inasmuch as no action will be taken by the Council this evening; and all interviews will be taped by RVTV Channel 3 to be televised on April 20 at 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., April 22 at 6:00 p.m., and April 23 at 1:00 p.m.

In conclusion, the Mayor advised that at the regular meeting of Council on Monday, May 7, 2001, at 2:00 p.m., (the meeting was later changed to 3:15 p.m.), or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, Council will hold an election to fill the two vacancies on the Roanoke City School Board.

The first person to be interviewed was Ruth C. Willson.

Ms. Willson advised that she was present to request the support of Council for reappointment to the Roanoke City School Board and to thank the Members of Council for allowing her to serve during the past three years. In that time, she stated that she has supported teacher salaries, improved working conditions for all school personnel, after school programs for student tutoring and enrichment purposes, activity buses for middle school students, a new focus on reading, support for a new facility for the Roanoke Academy for Mathematics and Science, and excellent facilities at all levels of the school system. She added that Roanoke must have schools that are a source of community pride that are attractive to businesses and families; the current high school facility study is especially important; gymnasiums

under construction at both Fairview and Fishburn Park Elementary Schools will be a source of pride; and completion of the capital improvements plan is anxiously awaited. She advised that the safety of all children is paramount in her thoughts and actions, including cameras on buses in key locations and increased personnel and vigilance to enhance school safety. She further advised that she is always accessible to parents, guardians, and to the community and she welcomes input from parents with varying opinions; and she studies all sides of an issue, does her homework and thoughtfully considers the educational challenges facing the community. She pointed out that the School Board functions as a team and she is proud to be a part of the Board; she believes in the School Board's goals and objectives and in the value of public education; and she expressed appreciation for the excellent educational opportunities that have been provided to her children in the Roanoke City Public Schools. However, she stated that there is much to be done; i.e.: the City must continue to improve its instructional programs, to attract and retain the best and most qualified teachers and administrators, to reduce the student drop out rate and constantly seek new ways to involve parents in the community and in the school system. She further stated that her experience, dedication and commitment to public education, the school system, the community and to the City as a whole would be an asset to the School Board. She advised that she worked to promote the Capital Improvements Program Bond Issue in 1997 as Chair of Advantage Roanoke for the Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce; she served on

the Youth Services Citizen Board, School Safety Advisory Board, School Board's Long Range Planning Committee, and Chair of the School Board's Audit committee; she is a frequent visitor to all schools and alternative education sites where she sees evidence of the work of many persons; she is proud of the partnership that exists between City Council and the school system and by working together cooperatively much has been accomplished by constructing a cornerstone that focuses on all children in the Roanoke City School system.

Mr. Bestpitch asked the following questions:

I have heard from numerous people who comment on the strong positive working relationship among City Council, the School Board and the central administration. I have heard from a number of teachers and on site administrators who feel that they are a part of a fourth group whose opinions are not always considered when important decisions are made. What would you do as a School Board member to expand this three-way partnership to more of a four-way partnership?

Ms. Willson advised that parents and teachers of the Roanoke City Schools have an opportunity to participate in the decisions made by the School Board through their attendance at public hearings on the school budget; and students,

employees and the community at-large have been invited to provide input at School Board meetings. She stated that the Superintendent has appointed an advisory committee composed of representatives from each school site, Roanoke Central Council PTA holds monthly meetings at which time the Superintendent meets with representatives from each school; therefore, there is ample opportunity for discussion of matters that concern the schools.

What would you do to increase parental involvement in the education of their children?

Ms. Willson advised that in 1996-97, she served on the Long Range Planning Committee which was charged with the task of developing a plan and recommendations to increase parental involvement and each principal was asked to develop his or her own school plan which was an opportunity to appreciate the uniqueness of each school and for the teachers and parents to have an opportunity for input. She stated that a calendar is sent out early in the school year so that working parents and parents who travel will have an opportunity to schedule in advance those school activities and events that they wish to attend. She called attention to a computer-oriented project which provides communication between four pilot schools and families and by using e-mail, the families can review teacher homework schedules and communicate by e-mail. She noted the importance at the

beginning of the school year of having positive communication between the school and the home because some families are of the opinion that the only time they hear from the schools is when the news is not good. She stated that a better job has been done in providing earlier notification of problems with grading, and there is an opportunity for two parent teacher conferences each year as opposed to only one in the fall.

Vice-Mayor Carder asked the following question:

We are losing some of our seasoned teachers. Let us assume that teacher morale is not good. What would you propose in terms of changes to determine how the school system is performing and to provide feedback to the School Board in terms of how students, teachers, principals and the School Board perceive the Roanoke City Schools?

Ms. Willson advised that there is an opportunity to use a survey and surveys are currently outstanding on school bullying and school safety issues. She stated that the School Board has a good working relationship with the Roanoke Education Association and members of the REA meet regularly with the Superintendent of Schools. She further stated that there is an opportunity for advertised public

hearings to encourage parental input. She advised that she is a regular visitor to the schools, she is a visible and accessible School Board member, and she welcomes

he opportunity for dialogue when she visits the schools by talking with all employees.

Mr. Hudson asked the following question:

What is your assessment of Dr. E. Wayne Harris, Superintendent of Roanoke City Public Schools?

Ms. Willson advised that Dr. Harris is a strong leader who sets high expectations and goals for each school and then he encourages the schools to work together; he is the current President of the Urban Superintendents League; and he is actively involved with a program at Harvard University where he works with doctoral students who are earning their degrees which helps to keep Roanoke in the forefront with research and new ideas. She stated that the School Board evaluates the performance of the Superintendent each year, along with a self-evaluation of its working relationship with Dr. Harris; and overall, she added that she is pleased with the performance of Dr. Harris and hopes he will remain with the Roanoke City School System throughout his contract period.

Ms. Wyatt asked the following questions:

Over the past three to four years, all six middle school principals, both high school principals and five or six elementary school principals have either resigned or retired, which is approximately 50 per cent of the building level administrators in the school system. What does that indicate to you? Have you done any kind of exit polls, or engaged in dialogue with any of these individuals to determine their reasons for leaving, and what kind of indication does that give for the school system?

Ms. Willson advised that many administrators and teachers have served the City and the profession over a long period of time; however, the problem is not only in Roanoke City, but nation-wide. She stated that currently, hiring and retaining teachers is the number one challenge of the School Board which is one of the reasons that Roanoke City needs to maintain a fair and competitive teacher and administrator salary package. She added that the school personnel office could engage in exit polls if they are not currently doing so to gain a better understanding as to the reasons that teachers are leaving the school system.

Ms. Wyatt clarified her question to inquire if Ms. Willson sees any need as a School Board Member to determine why school personnel are leaving the system.

Ms. Willson responded that school personnel transfer to surrounding districts, or pursue other career opportunities out of state, or take early retirement to pursue

other career paths. She advised that often times when an employee does not receive a promotion, they will look for opportunities elsewhere. She stated that it may be necessary to be more proactive in training future principals because there is a challenge to fill the vacancies.

On a scale of one to ten, one being low and ten being high, how effective are the site based councils are that are currently in the schools and what would you do to make them more effective?

Ms. Willson advised that she was originally part of the instructional council which evolved into the site based council with more decision making powers. She stated that more questions should be asked and that principals should be required to report to the School administration. She stated that she is an advocate of site based councils and her past learning experience and what she was able to contribute to the community was meaningful. She added that she would like to see the site based councils be more effective at each school site.

The Mayor asked the following questions:

Is it your belief that only government has the ability to run a school system?

Ms. Willson advised that she believes in public education, because it has served our country well; she believes in parental involvement and in the parent's ability to make choices, and there are parents who might choose not to enroll their child in a public school. She stated that she has been a strong advocate for public education; the school system needs to be innovative and provide a certain relevancy, and there are many different opportunities for children to receive their education. She advised that she does not believe that only government has the ability to operate the schools.

Would you support a charter school managed outside the traditional School Board?

Ms. Willson advised that her understanding of the legislation is that the School Board is the managing authority for any charter school in the Commonwealth of Virginia and unless such legislation changes, it is not an option. She stated that there is an option for two schools in each school district, and each year, the School Board advertises for applications to determine if there are members of the community who believe that a charter school should be pursued.

The second person to be interviewed was Melvin A. Garrett.

Mr. Garrett advised that he represents a new beginning because there are many improvements that can be accomplished if the right programs are implemented in Roanoke's school system. He stated that he represents a new direction and a new learning attitude for students and he represents a new way of motivating students and teachers that should help to improve student test scores. He added that he believes in a new partnership and responsibility that must be assumed by parents, because parents must discipline their children every day in order for them to be effective in their learning experience; and parents should check homework assignments each day. He suggested the initiation of special programs that are important because of the multitude of nationalities of students coming into the Roanoke City Schools, therefore, a multi-cultural educational program is needed to help students adjust to their new learning environment. He stated that the driver education program can be improved by forming partnerships to place driver education equipment in the schools as a motivation tool; the discipline program can be improved because the average teacher disciplines children at least seven minutes a day, 35 minutes a week, 140 minutes a month, or 1400 minutes a year and the time saved could be used to enhance the learning experience. He stated that there is a need to increase minority opportunities for teachers to ensure that the right opportunities are available for the best qualified minority teachers; and he supports a review of guidelines and procedures for disciplining teachers in order to be fair in the overall process. He called attention to the need for more counseling for middle

school and high school students to address the drop out rate and student behavior which should help to reduce the level of discipline that is occurring in the home and in the schools. He stated that a pre-vocational education program should be implemented at the elementary and middle school levels; improvements are needed in the alternative education program; implementation of an intramural sports program is needed as a motivator to improved student behavior; and a music program, including a recording studio where students could be taught the proper use of English and the importance of history, would also serve as a motivator. If appointed, he stated that he would bring new ideas and direction to the Roanoke City School Board.

Mr. Hudson asked the following question:

Define what accountability means to you at the following levels: administration, teachers and students?

Mr. Garrett advised that the administration plays an active role if employees are doing their part, which brings forth partnership, or chain of command, into the learning process that provides administrators with guidelines for teachers to follow and provides teachers with guidelines for students to follow, leading to an effective learning experience and environment.

Mr. White asked the following question:

What do you see as the major strengths and the major weaknesses facing the Roanoke City School System?

Mr. Garrett advised that the most important strength is the ability of the administration to provide seminars for teachers to use for improvement in teaching skills and learning. He stated that a weakness is in accountability, because no one wants to take responsibility for accountability and discipline. To improve in these areas, he stated that the School system and parents could form a partnership leading to effective discipline and guidelines for the child to follow, which could be accomplished through a signed contract by the parent to insure that the child is aware of such responsibilities as homework and allowing school counselors to intervene on behalf of the teachers to counsel the child before they come into the classroom. He stated that he sees the need for improvement in employment opportunities for minorities who serve as role models; another improvement could be to offer pre-vocational education in elementary and middle schools where the weaknesses of the child can be identified at a early age and create programs to better intervene with learning disabilities.

Ms. Wyatt asked the following questions:

What do you think could be done to make the site based councils currently in the school system as effective as possible?

Mr. Garrett advised that site based councils could form a partnership with business, or create opportunities at the schools where children could participate in a part-time job, or create a program where the business could donate tickets to various events for attendance by the parent and the child in an effort to form a bond and once that bond is formed, there will be a certain measure of success.

Over the past four years, approximately 50 per cent of the building level administrators have left the school system. Some have retired and some have resigned. What does that indicate about Roanoke's school system?

Mr. Garrett stated that pressure is coming from the School administration by evaluating teachers according to student test scores on the Standards of Learning tests, and some teachers are of the opinion that they do not have the necessary resources in order to help improve student test scores, such as the writing curriculum, new textbooks, and intervention with administrators in creating new ideas. He stated that some of the pressure could be removed from administrators, principals and teachers by assuring them that the focus is on the student to learn

first and foremost, and the system is also interested in creating an opportunity whereby students will be successful when they leave the classroom.

Mr. Bestpitch asked the following questions:

I have heard from numerous people who commented on the strong positive working relationship among City Council, the School Board and the central administration. I have heard from a number of teachers and on site administrators who feel that they are a part of a fourth group whose opinions are not always considered when important decisions are made. What would you do as a School Board member to expand this three-way partnership to more of a four-way partnership?

Mr. Garrett advised that meetings could be held every month with the School Board, City Council, teachers and students which would provide an opportunity for everyone to express themselves. He stated that communication is important and in order to achieve communication, there must be an opportunity for a parent to meet and discuss concerns freely and openly.

What would you do as a School Board member to increase parental involvement in the education of their child?

Mr. Garrett advised that parents play the most important role in educating their children. He stated that a contract could be signed by the parent each year which includes guidelines provided by the school system in connection with expectations for homework, discipline, etc.; and when more initiative is taken to involve parents, there will be a better school system and a better attitude toward the learning experience, along with an improved atmosphere of discipline where the teacher feels comfortable in teaching and the student feels comfortable in learning.

Mr. Carder asked the following question:

Knowing that morale is a multi-faceted process, you mentioned specific programs that you would support to address teacher morale, please elaborate.

Mr. Garrett advised that self-esteem is primary to being an effective teacher along with the ability to identify individual learning disabilities, and the initiative to motivate a child to improve. He stated that providing a teacher with funds to take his or her class on a field trip, or giving a student the opportunity to win a free hamburger from a local fast food restaurant are student motivators. He stated that a new learning attitude can be created by taking some of those things that have served as motivators in the past and combining them with new programs that will lead to improved self-esteem.

The Mayor asked the following questions:

Is it your belief that only government can run the school system?

Mr. Garrett advised that government has a role in operating the schools such as providing funds, guidelines, and opportunities for learning for those students with learning disabilities, and it is up to the Superintendent, school administrators and school teachers to operate the schools effectively on a daily basis. He stated that he did not believe that only government has the ability to operate a school system.

Would you support a charter school managed outside of the traditional school board?

Mr. Garrett advised that charter schools will reduce the effectiveness of the current school system. He stated that if funds are available and if students can be successful in a charter school program, he sees no reason why they could not attend a charter program in another school district. However, in the local school district, he advised that the City school system has a role to meet the needs of the students and Roanoke's school system is doing a fair job.

William E. Skeen was the third person to be interviewed.

Mr. Skeen advised that Roanoke City enjoys one of the finest school systems in the country, and with the leadership of City Council and the Superintendent of Schools, Roanoke is fortunate to have modern, up to date facilities with educators who are committed, excited and happy in their jobs. He stated that in his visits to Roanoke's schools, he found safe, orderly facilities with teachers actively engaging students with high tech equipment in high tech schools, with themes and special programs that excite students and parents alike in areas such as arts, culture, dance, music, aero space, engineering, communications, broadcasting media, computers and cars. He further stated that he found character in administrators, teachers and students; and he found that Roanoke is a national leader in implementing the Character Counts Program and commended the dramatic effect this program has had on student behavior by preparing students in their roles to be good citizens. He added that he visited with Dr. E. Wayne Harris, Superintendent of Schools, to learn more about the schools and the duties and responsibilities of being a member of the School Board, and to learn about Dr. Harris' vision for the schools, and he came away from the meeting even more impressed about the deliberate focus and direction of Roanoke's educational system, and more excited about becoming a School Board Trustee; and he wants to help continue to build on the tradition of excellence that the Roanoke City School System enjoys today. He stated that his business, non-profit, education and board-related experiences will enable him to be a contributing member of the School Board; as the parent of two teenage boys who continue to be educated

in the Roanoke City School System, he understands the challenges and pressures that students face in today's world; as the Business Director of Roanoke's community action agency, which has a major alternative education program, he knows first hand the difficulties that some children face in completing their education; as the husband of a special education teacher, he understands the challenges that administrators and educators face in working with limited staff, resources and budgets; as a 16 year adjunct faculty member at Virginia Western Community College, he understands the challenges that motivate and stimulate students toward higher achievement; and with 23 years of experience in banking, financing and business administration, he has a good understanding of what the business community wants and needs in tomorrow's employees. He noted that he has served as a member and leader on numerous City, local and human service agencies, and business-related boards and this experience in finance, budget and policy management would be an asset to the School Board. He explained that he would bring a variety of skills and experiences which can help to lead the schools in the difficult decisions that must be made to continue on its path of success; and if appointed to the School board, he will work hard to continue the tradition of excellence. He advised that he would like to help implement several school initiatives which include providing planning and financial leadership to renovate both Patrick Henry and William Fleming High Schools, and a program to involve parents in their role as the primary motivator for their child's educational success, and to promote

their active involvement in the schools. He stated that it must be emphasized to parents that the school system is not the primary and sole determinant for their child's academic performance and encouragement, because modeling and learning begins at home long before the child comes to the school system and the learning experience continues for many years. He added that in the same way that exercise facilities have drawn parents into the schools at Breckinridge and Woodrow Wilson Middle Schools, ways need to be found to draw parents closer to other neighborhood schools. He stated that during this time of concern over school violence, a more fully developed life skills program must be implemented, and students must have a healthy level of self-esteem to succeed at their educational endeavors and skills to manage anger and resolve conflict. He noted that he would encourage a program of early identification of at risk children by providing them with early intervention counseling to successfully and peacefully resolve conflict; and students must be prepared emotionally to handle the challenge and the pressures and conflicts they face during the school years as well as during their life time. He stated that he would like to continue to enhance volunteer support from the business community to augment classroom learning and to model the Character Counts Program into all schools; and because they have short attention spans and high expectations for a stimulating learning environment, children learn quickest when support is readily available. He added that he believes in recruitment and hiring, and retaining the best teachers, educators and administrators is the most pressing need

of the school system today because many of Roanoke's experienced educators are approaching retirement age. He added that new teachers must receive professional mentors and support to enable them to do their jobs effectively and that educators should be justly compensated for the time they devote to the profession with a salary scale that is both competitive and fair and that educators receive the level of recognition they deserve. If elected to serve on the School Board, he advised that he will listen carefully, study closely, and work cooperatively to become a contributing member. He requested the support of Council and would welcome the opportunity to give something back to the school system which continues to prepare two of his three children for world of work and community responsibility.

Mr. Carder asked the following question:

The City of Charleston, South Carolina, has a successful business-education partnership. What would you do in terms of enhancing that program or trying to bring that kind of business-education partnership to Roanoke's school system?

Mr. Skeen advised that Roanoke must ask its businesses to be involved and emphasize to the business community that its investment today will pay dividends tomorrow; and that their involvement in the school system insures a steady supply

of well trained qualified people who will better serve the labor force of the future. He stated that citizens, parents and businesses will step up to the plate if they are asked.

Mr. Hudson asked the following question:

Define what accountability means to you at the following levels: administration, teachers and students?

Mr. Skeen advised that accountability starts with the student and by grade six or seven, students need to understand that is it their personal responsibility to learn, because it is their education and their future. Secondly, he added that parents need to understand that it is their role and active involvement that augments the learning experience for their child and if the parent is not there to support the teacher, the job of the teacher is much harder. He stated that thirdly, teachers, administrators and the School Board are next accountable in providing safe and pleasant facilities and good program instruction to insure that all children get the best education possible. Fourthly, he noted that City Council is in the line of accountability because Council is the taxing authority and controls the resources that go into the school system, and lastly, the community at-large is accountable because the community is measured by the children that it graduates from its school system and sends into the world.

Ms. Wyatt asked the following questions:

Over the past approximately four years, six of the middle school principals, both high school and five or six elementary school principals have either retired or resigned which is approximately 50 per cent of our building level administrators. What does that indicate to you and what do we need to do about it?

Mr. Skeen advised that retirement at the state and local levels has made it more attractive for people to retire at an early age; the Standards of Learning and some of the pressures that have come about because of new measurements have encouraged some school employees to consider early retirement, individuals look at second careers, and persons of long tenure may decide to pursue another profession. He stated that if one looks at the overall age of personnel in the school system, employees are getting older and the system has to be ready with a trained pool of staff who can step into these positions which should be a top priority of the school administration and the School Board.

On a scale of one to ten, one being the lowest and ten being the highest, how effective do you think the school site based councils are and what would you do to make them more effective?

Mr. Skeen advised that he could not speak to how effective the school site based councils are; however, in visiting the schools, he found a disparity between parental involvement, how well the PTA systems work, and the level of effectiveness of the site based council in one school versus other schools. He stated that success can be duplicated, but what works in one school may not work in another, and it is also true that one has to work harder in some neighborhoods than others, and some schools have more involvement by the PTA and parents. He called attention to the belief that schools are important to the neighborhoods, but there are many parents and adults who have not visited a school since their children graduated and they have not seen the changes or the contributions that the schools make to a community, therefore, a better job needs to be done to bring people back into the schools. He added that there are a number of other resources that could draw people back into the schools, the school system should be more creative, identify best practices, confer with other localities on proven practices and successes and duplicate those programs in Roanoke City.

Mr. Bestpitch asked the following questions:

I have heard from numerous people who comment on the strong positive working relationship between the City, the School Board and central administration. I have heard from a number of teachers and on site administrators who feel that they

are a part of a fourth group whose opinions are not always considered when important decisions are made. What would you do as a School Board member to expand this three-way partnership into more of a four-way partnership?

Mr. Skeen advised that if elected to the School Board, he will listen closely to all partners in the educational arena because people make up the schools, teachers are the people who are entrusted to educate the children and if teachers are left out of the communication process, a valuable resource is overlooked and teachers should be brought into the fold quickly.

What specific things would you do to increase parental involvement in the education of their children?

Mr. Skeen advised that parents have to be asked to be involved. He stated that publications from the School Superintendent could be used to educate parents so that they will see that they are important to the education process and to the lives of their children and once parents are involved, they should be assigned meaningful tasks and responsibilities that make them feel as though they are a part of the process.

The Mayor asked the following questions:

Is it your belief that only government has the ability to run the schools?

Mr. Skeen answered no. He stated that there is a synergy; the number one strength of the school system is the dedication of teachers, administrators, students, School Board, and City Council and it takes all parties to make the school system succeed. He stated that success cannot be left at the door step of any one entity and all parties have to work cooperatively, collaboratively and identify ways to meet the interests of everyone because operating an educational system with 13,000 students and a budget of approximately \$95 million is a huge undertaking.

Would you support a charter school operated outside of the traditional School Board?

Mr. Skeen advised that charter schools have a place, but he does not believe that Roanoke is ready for a charter school that would compete with existing school facilities. He stated that Roanoke has excellent facilities that it continues to improve upon; available resources should be used to upgrade Roanoke's remaining schools that need renovation, to insure adequate programming, and to insure that school personnel are properly compensated, along with the necessary instructional resources in order to be successful. He advised that Roanoke's school system

should take care of what it has at this point and improve upon resources as much as possible.

At this point, the Mayor left the meeting.

The fourth person to be interviewed was Melinda J. Payne.

Ms. Payne expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve on the School Board for approximately six years. She advised that she has taken the responsibility of School Board Trustee seriously, and she would like to continue to serve on the Board for another three years. She stated that over the past two years, she has provided leadership to the School Board, serving as Chair; the City of Roanoke is fortunate to have a School Board that is committed to serving the 13,000 plus students in Roanoke's 29 schools, and a School Board that supports the efforts of teachers who make the difference in the lives of Roanoke's children on a daily basis. She stated that the School Board would not be the highly respected division that it is today without the support of bus drivers, custodians, security staff, cafeteria workers, aids, assistants, secretaries and the administration, all of whom work together to garner recognition for Roanoke City Public Schools as one of the most outstanding districts in the state, region and nation. She commended City Council

on the support that it provides to make Roanoke's public education system successful.

Ms. Wyatt asked the following questions:

Over the past four years, six middle school principals, two high school principals and five or six elementary school principals have either retired or resigned which is approximately 50 per cent of Roanoke's building level administrators. What does that indicate to you about Roanoke City Schools and what should be done about it?

Ms. Payne advised that the School Board has struggled with the question for some time, which indicates a lack of prepared persons in the school ranks for leadership roles. She stated that the school system has been weak in preparing staff for those roles so that when vacancies occur, there are qualified persons within the school district who can be rotated into administrative positions. She explained that the School Board has had to go back into the retirement ranks and place retired personnel in these type of positions knowing that within a few years they will again retire, which has continued to add to the problem. She stated that there are those individuals who move on to higher paying positions, and it is a matter of doing a

better job in preparing those persons already on staff to step into openings as they occur.

On a scale of one to ten, one being the lowest, ten being the highest, how effective do you think the site based councils in Roanoke City Schools are and what would you do to improve them?

Ms. Payne advised that she has had personal issues with site based councils ever since her daughter enrolled in the City's school system. She questioned how the different grading systems in each school were established, and stated that site based councils have caused problems with the grading system and the way abilities of students are assessed. She stated that while there are some advantages to site based management, such as parental involvement, the school system sometimes loses a grasp on those things that should be at the top of the list to be addressed. She added that although site base management exists in Roanoke's schools, she is not a true proponent.

Mr. Bestpitch asked the following questions:

I have heard a number of people comment on the strong positive working relationship between the City, the School Board and central administration. I have

heard from a number of teachers and on site administrators who feel that they are a part of a fourth group whose opinions are not always considered when important decisions are made. What would you do as a School Board member to expand this three-way partnership into more of a four-way partnership?

Ms. Payne advised that this is a continual problem because of the number of persons who do not feel comfortable in speaking up for fear of retaliation; and it is an area that the School Board must continue to address in order to make people feel that they are a part of the total package, by insuring that they are involved and that they are made to feel comfortable in expressing their views. She stated that during her meeting with the Roanoke Education Association, there was discussion with regard to ways to gauge the perspective of teachers, bus drivers, aids, cafeteria workers, etc., regarding the school system, because people come to the table with differing opinions; therefore, the school system needs to embrace all school employees to insure that the School Board receives feedback and when issues are brought to the table and school employees believe that they have not been heard, the School Board should listen to them and provide them with an open forum. She added that whenever a parent telephones, she is quick to respond because she wants to know what is on the minds of teachers and parents, bus drivers, etc., to address concerns in an effort to find a better way to deal with issues so that

everyone is provided with the pertinent information and made to feel a part of the total system and valued for what they contribute.

What specific things would you do to encourage parental involvement in the education of their children?

Ms. Payne advised that the Superintendent sends a newsletter to parents periodically, and parent-teacher associations are an effective way to get the word out, but in order to find ways to encourage parental involvement, the school system must continue to ask parents, with some consistency, to be involved in their child's learning experience and to provide input on how Roanoke's school system is performing.

Mr. Hudson asked the following question:

What is your assessment of Dr. E. Wayne Harris, Superintendent of Schools?

Ms. Payne advised that Dr. Harris is well known, admired and highly respected by his peers based on the feedback she has received. She stated that he does an effective job for the school system; however, he is not perfect, nor is anyone else, but overall he tries to give his best. She added that sometimes he has to be reminded to

listen to the people a little more; he does an effective job in addressing the needs of students; however, he could be more understanding and supportive of the needs of teachers. Overall, she stated that he is an effective Superintendent who tries to do what is best for all of Roanoke's students.

Mr. White asked the following question:

What do you see as the major strengths and the major weaknesses facing the Roanoke City School System and what would you do to enhance the strengths and to mitigate the weaknesses?

Ms. Payne advised that overall, the strengths are in Roanoke's good teaching facilities, although there needs to be a way to rid the school system of the modular classrooms at certain school sites. She stated that Roanoke has tried to take its schools back to the community which can be evidenced through the fitness centers that the City and the School Board have instituted by making sure that the facilities are being used by the communities that they serve. She added that other strengths include school staff because Roanoke has a pool of good teachers and administrators, and a staff that cares about the children. She stated that a weakness lies in the fact that the school system is not developing personnel so that when openings occur, qualified staff with leadership skills are waiting to assume those

positions, in order to move the school division ahead. She advised that another weakness is that some of the schools are not as diverse as they should be and diversity is something that children should be subjected to at the elementary school level.

Mr. Carder asked the following question:

We in Roanoke have done a poor job in terms of marketing ourselves in many facets. What would you do to get the word out about our school system?

Ms. Payne advised that Roanoke City Schools invites local realtors to school sites to provide them with the opportunity to see first hand what Roanoke's school system has to offer. She stated that Roanoke is fighting a battle with what people hear and what they envision about the Roanoke City Schools, and because Roanoke is an urban area, people tend to think that urban school systems are riddled with problems, and they forget about the types of programs that the City of Roanoke has to offer. She added that Roanoke is in an enviable position with other school divisions because of the support that City Council gives to the School Board to make those programs come to fruition. In order to help people understand, she advised that the message has to go out via the schools web-site, publications, word of mouth, marketing the system through teacher job fairs, and telling Roanoke's story to

organizations like the Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, and Lions Club, etc., which will enable the system to dispel some of the perceptions about Roanoke City Public Schools.

Vice-Mayor Carder asked the following questions on behalf of the Mayor.

Is it your belief that only government has the ability to run a school system?

Ms. Payne advised that it is not her belief that only government has the ability to run a school system.

Would you support a charter school managed outside of the traditional School Board?

Ms. Payne advised that if the charter school concept is handled correctly and if there is an assurance that children will get a quality education, she would support a charter school under those circumstances because not all children can learn in a traditional school setting. She stated that charter schools provide an alternative and if they are established using the right guidelines, she would most likely be supportive.

The fifth and last person to be interviewed was Gary W. Bowman.

Mr. Bowman advised that there are four reasons he should be appointed to the School Board. First, he stated that on paper and in terms of experience, he is the most qualified person to present himself for a seat on the School Board. He added that he has been extensively trained in public personnel, public budgets and policy evaluation, he is an attorney which represents a significant qualification because he deals with people on a day-to-day basis by helping to solve their problems and much of what the School Board does has to do with people and their problems, trying to assess the merits and finding a solution. He advised that most importantly, he has three children in the school system, he is the only applicant who has a child in elementary school, and the only applicant who will have that same child in the rebuilt Patrick Henry High School, therefore, he has a long term stake in the affairs of the schools, and hopes to have an impact on the reconstructed Patrick Henry High School and the direction that school policy will take in the future. Secondly, he stated that he is the most independent person to present himself for appointment, and he has repeatedly demonstrated that he acts in the interest of better government. He noted that he presents himself as a School Board candidate because he believes that he can have a significant impact on making the schools more responsive to the customers who are the parents. Thirdly, in terms of responsiveness, he advised that the schools have pockets of excellence that should be encouraged; however, other

problems are dysfunctional to the point of being absurd and when parents raise questions regarding those problems, they are often met with arrogance and bureaucratic stonewalling, they do not get a solution to the problem, and if appointed to the School Board, he would act as an intermediary between the parents and the school system which is lacking at the current time. He stated that he would bring an innovative energy and enthusiasm to the School Board, and he is a strong believer in school choice and decentralization which is the direction that Roanoke's schools should take. He advised that the school system has already taken certain strides in that direction which have been positive and were met with success, and by fostering that innovation, the schools can be improved by applying the principles of the market competition and respect to all customers of Roanoke's schools.

Mr. Bestpitch asked the following questions:

I have heard from numerous people about the strong positive working relationship between City Council, the School Board and central administration. I have heard from a number of teachers and on site administrators who feel that they are a part of a fourth group whose opinions are not always considered when important decisions are made. What would you do as a School Board member to expand this three-way partnership into more of a four-way partnership?

Mr. Bowman advised that he has not heard that concern expressed, although he has seen some evidence of it. He stated that there is a perception among school teachers and administrators at the school level that what happens in central administration is far removed from what is being done at the schools. He added that there are instances where he has personally observed situations where it appears that the “head is divorced from the body”. He stated that there should be more cognizance at the level of the administration, which is where the problem seems to

exist, regarding concerns expressed by parents and persons at the school level, rather than having those concerns met with defensiveness by the administration.

What specific things would you do to increase parental involvement in the education of their children?

Mr. Bowman advised that there are layers of involvement, there are parents who are particularly interested in what is going on in the schools and those same parents will be active in parent-teacher associations and site based councils, and in order for them to be effective, there must be effective site based councils which currently do not exist in all schools. He stated that in promoting the parent-teacher associations, there must be congruence between school districts and neighborhoods which is currently not taking place. He advised that the school administration has created a system where the upper level of children in the system receive better treatment than those less fortunate children which has created a problem, and the school administration should be more cognizant of not catering to problem people. He noted that the solution to the problem is to have a School Board with an administration that is responsive to the rest of the people and those are the people that he wants to be responsive to and to serve as an intermediary in order to represent those persons in addressing their concerns with the school administration and other members of the School Board.

Mr. Hudson asked the following question:

Define what accountability means to you at the following levels: administration, teachers and students.

Mr. Bowman advised that accountability is the wrong word to focus on at this point in administering the schools. He stated that in public administration, there are two distinct terms, accountability and responsiveness; and accountability means that individuals can be penalized, or otherwise provided negative or positive incentives, if certain consequences do not occur. He stated that everyone should be required to meet a standard of performance on the job, regular supervision in the schools can determine what the standard is and new procedures are not necessary to tie accountability to some kind of quantitative measures. He explained that teachers should be responsible for doing a good job in the teaching arena, and administrators should be held accountable if they do things that do not make sense, or if they are not doing their job properly.

Mr. White asked the following question:

What do you see as the major strengths and the major weaknesses facing the Roanoke City School System and what would you do to enhance the strengths and to mitigate the weaknesses?

Mr. Bowman advised that one of the strengths is the good teaching staff in the school system. He stated that weaknesses are those things that detract from the teachers being able to do a good job in the classroom and those things that prevent children from interacting with the teacher. He added that all of the procedures are in place that should be implemented to properly deal with problem children; there are situations in Roanoke City Schools where there are good teachers with good hearts, but those same teachers are inept and they need to be told that this is not acceptable. He stated that another problem is when an individual tries to highlight some of the problems in the school system, responses from some administrators are uncivil, therefore, a person is faced with a rude or insulting school employee when that person is trying to identify a problem, which in turn, alienates parents and makes them wonder how the school system is fostering civility in the schools when administrators are not acting civil themselves. He reiterated that the strength lies with the teachers, and the weakness is in encouraging administrators to respond to questions or concerns that need to be addressed.

Ms. Wyatt asked the following questions:

Over the past four years we have had six middle school principals, two high school principals and five to six elementary school principals either resign or retire which is approximately 50 per cent of building level administrators in a four year period. What does that indicate to you about Roanoke City Public Schools and what should be done about it?

Mr. Bowman advised that the situation is not something that he is familiar with, so he would be hesitant to address the question. He stated that there are two problems at Patrick Henry High School and there is no solution because the school does not have a long term principal. He added that employment of principals at the various schools must be a top priority, even if additional funds must be allocated.

Mr. Carder asked the following questions on behalf of the Mayor:

Is it your belief that only government has the ability to run a school system?

Mr. Bowman advised that government does not have the exclusive monopoly, nor is it the expert to run a school system. He stated that although it should not, government in Roanoke City has a legal monopoly on running the schools.

Would you support a charter school managed outside of the traditional school board?

Mr. Bowman responded in the affirmative. He advised that the charter school statute appears to authorize the school districts to charter schools established by anyone. He further advised that there is a charter school in Roanoke; however, he was dismayed to learn that Dr. Harris and Mr. Kelley initiated the idea for a charter school, and since funds come from the public budget, it is not a true charter school, but a district school. He explained that there is a legal mechanism for charter schools, but the concept will face opposition at the School Board level because the School Board wants charter schools that are district schools. He advised that there are numerous ideas that should be available as opportunities for charter schools and should be promoted so that charter schools will be implemented throughout the City of Roanoke, which is another way to increase parental responsiveness and to increase educational attainment in the future.

There being no further business, the Vice-Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

A P P R O V E D

ATTEST:

Mary F. Parker

City Clerk

Ralph K. Smith

Mayor
